

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION**

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

**Please enter the following amended claims:**

3. (Amended) A fermentation vat according to Claim 1, characterised in that the said selective valve means (22) include a valve body (51) in the shape of a hollow cylinder, at least two outlet apertures (52a, 52b) in the lateral surface of the said valve body, an inlet aperture (51c) in one end of the said valve body and a substantially cylindrical valve shutter (80) arranged for coaxial rotation within the said body and shaped so as to form a 90° elbow joint between the said intake aperture and one of the said outlet apertures.

4. (Amended) A fermentation vat according to Claim 1, characterised in that the said injector means (28, 32) are located in the uplift pipe upstream of the said selective valve means (22).

5. (Amended) A fermentation vat according to Claim 1, characterised in that the said injector means (28, 32) are located on the uplift pipe downstream of the said selective valve means (22) and on at least one of the pipes (24, 26) leading from the said valve means (22) to deliver the liquid into the upper vat and/or into the main vat.

6. (Amended) A fermentation vat according to Claim 1, characterised in that it includes a control unit (38) which cooperates with the said selective valve means (22) associated with the uplift pipe and is operable to control:

- operations to oxygenate the liquid in the main vat (2) by drawing off liquid from the bottom of the said vat, aspirating ambient air, mixing it into the flow of liquid and returning the oxygenated liquid to the main vat, and

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- operations to oxygenate the liquid in the main vat (2) by drawing off liquid from the bottom of the said vat, aspirating air and mixing it with the flow of liquid, then conveying the oxygenated liquid to the upper vat (4) and discharging it therefrom into the main vat, thereby spraying the marc cap floating on the must.

7. A fermentation method, in particular for red wine, carried out in a fermentation vat according to Claim 1, characterised in that it includes the steps of:

a) carrying out cycles for oxygenating the liquid in the main vat by drawing off liquid from the bottom of the said vat, aspirating ambient air and mixing it with the flow of liquid and returning the oxygenated liquid to the mass of liquid in the main vat, and

b) carrying out cycles for oxygenating the liquid in the main vat by drawing off liquid from the bottom of the said vat, aspirating ambient air and mixing it with the flow of liquid, conveying the oxygenated liquid to the upper vat and discharging this liquid from there into the main vat, thereby spraying the marc floating on the liquid contained therein.

**IN THE ABSTRACT:**

**Please delete the present Abstract of the Disclosure and replace it with the following Abstract of the Disclosure found on the attached unnumbered sheet.**